UNIVERSAL DESIGN

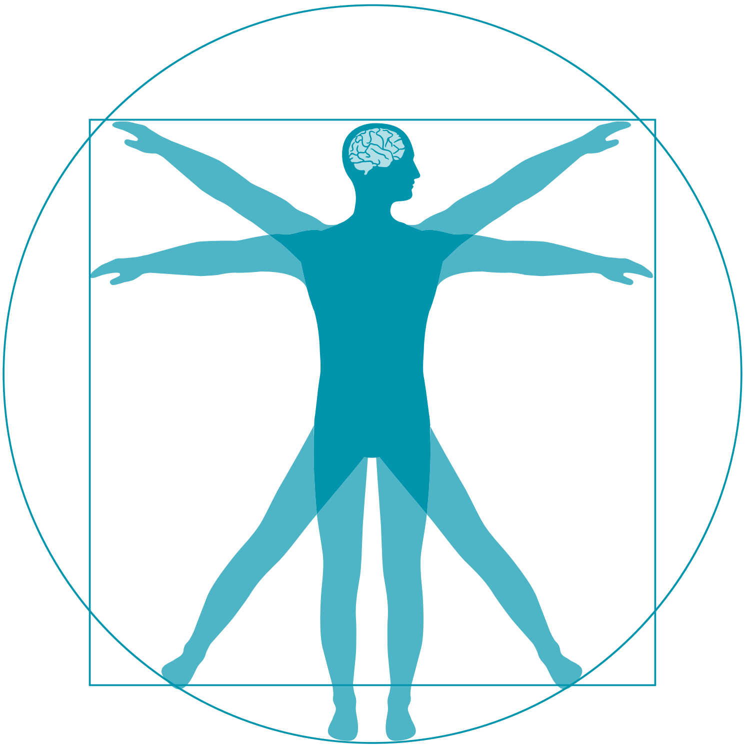
Best Practices for Accessibility in Trainings, Meetings and Events

City of Bellevue
Diversity Advantage

UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Best Practices for Accessibility in Trainings, Meetings and Events

Universal Design: Spaces and programming are intentionally created to be inherently accessible to all people, without the need for individual modification or accommodation. Embracing the principles of universal design during trainings, meetings and events creates an inviting space where all bodies and minds are considered and valued.



Step 1

Physical Environment

Consider the space before the event or meeting is scheduled.

- ✔ Can a wheelchair user or person with another piece of equipment access all parts of the room? This includes not only the first seat by the door, but the front of the room and the middle. A mobility device user should be able to choose their seating or to sit with their peers, like everyone else.
- ✔ Does the space allow for mobility device users to reach all components in the room? (Whiteboard, podium, lights, etc.)
- ✔ Does the space allow for adjustment of lighting? As a matter of routine, lighting should not be on its brightest setting. This can be an uncomfortable environment for people with certain neurological and developmental disabilities.

- ✔ Does the space allow for participants to stand or pace in the back, if needed?
- ✔ Are the restrooms nearest the training, meeting or event space ADA accessible?
- ✔ Does the space you are in only have chairs that are on wheels? Can you provide at least one chair without wheels for those who may need this stability when going from standing to sitting?
- ✔ Consider dietary allergies and intolerances when providing food.

- ✔ Providing Communication Access Real Time Transcription (CART) should be done for larger events, especially those that include the public, even if no formal request has been received. This service is not only useful for those who are deaf or hard of hearing, but can also be helpful for those with limited English proficiency, as it provides a secondary method by which to process information.

These are things to consider well in advance so there is opportunity to adjust.

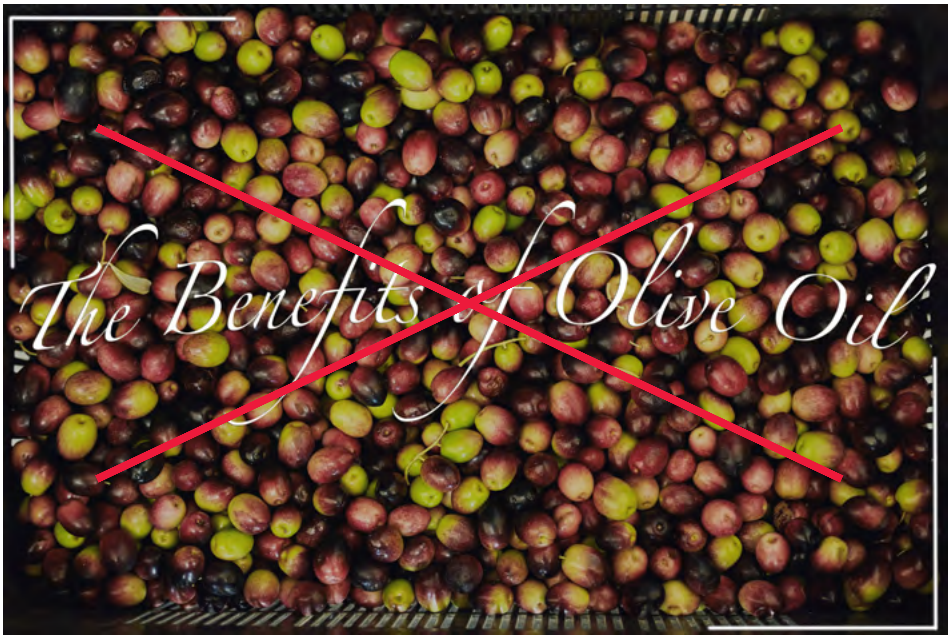
42%
os et accusamus et
dignissimos ducimus
itiis praesentium
um deleniti atque
quos dolores et quas
excepturi sint
ati cupiditate non
Nam lib
nobis
nihil in
maxin
possi
assu
repe

Step 2

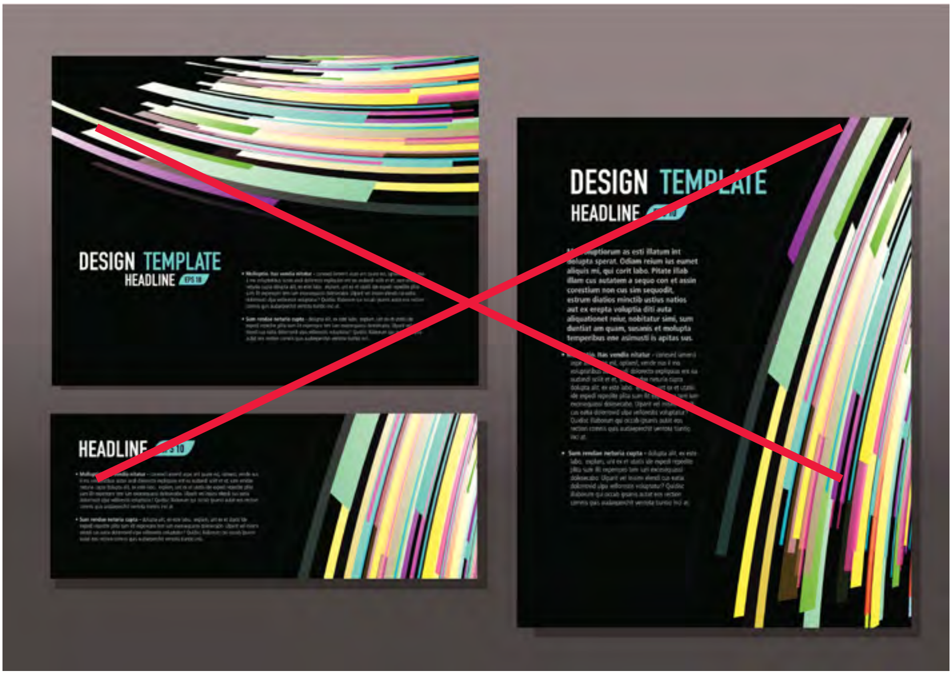
Content Development

- ✔ Ensure that color is not the only means of conveying information. People who are blind, have low vision, or are color blind will not be able to participate fully.
- ✔ Add an underline to color-coded hyperlink text so that people who are colorblind know that the text is linked even if they can't see the color. For headings, consider adding bold or using a larger font.
- ✔ Use strong contrast between text and background, so people with low vision can see and use the content. Use dark text on a white or off-white background, or reverse it and use white text on a dark background. White and black schemes also make it easier for people who are colorblind to distinguish text and shapes.
- ✔ Give every slide a unique title. People who are blind, have low vision, or a reading disability rely on slide titles to navigate. By skimming or using a screen reader, they can quickly scan through a list of slide titles and go right to the slide they want.

- ✔ Use a simple table structure, and specify column header information. Screen readers keep track of their location in a table by counting table cells. If a table is nested within another table or if a cell is merged or split, the screen reader loses count and can’t provide helpful information after that point. Blank cells in a table could also mislead someone using a screen reader into thinking that there is nothing more in the table.
- ✔ Use a larger font size (18pt or larger), sans serif fonts, and sufficient white space. People with dyslexia compress, merge or distort lines of text.
- ✔ For people who have dyslexia or have low vision, reduce the reading load. For example, they may benefit from familiar sans serif fonts, such as Arial or Calibri. Avoid using all capital letters and excessive italics or underlines. Include ample white space between sentences and paragraphs.


The Benefits of Olive Oil

placing text over photos is difficult to read


DESIGN TEMPLATE
HEADLINE
DESIGN TEMPLATE
HEADLINE
HEADLINE

small font is difficult to read

- ✔ Always make videos accessible to users who are blind or have low vision and those who are deaf or hard of hearing, even if no one has identified themselves as such. Subtitles typically contain a transcription (or translation) of the dialogue. Closed captions typically also describe audio cues such as music or sound effects that occur off-screen. Video description means audio-narrated descriptions of a video's key visual elements. These descriptions are inserted into natural pauses in the program's dialogue. Video description makes videos more accessible to individuals who are blind or have low vision.
- ✔ Insert a visual cue of the transitions in the training (break times, lunch, or any other shift in the agenda.) Ensure that the language is the same as that found on the agenda.
- ✔ Avoiding hand written activities as much as possible. When this cannot be avoided, develop materials that provide ample room for response.

- ✔ Be cognizant of the different learning styles and ensure that everyone has a moment to shine:
    - **Visual** (spatial):
      You prefer using pictures, images, and spatial understanding.
    - **Aural** (auditory-musical):
      You prefer using sound and music.
    - **Verbal** (linguistic): You prefer using words, both in speech and writing.
    - **Physica**l (kinesthetic):
      You prefer using your body, hands and sense of touch.
    - **Logical** (mathematical): You prefer using logic, reasoning and systems.
    - **Social** (interpersonal): You prefer to learn in groups or with other people.
    - **Solitary** (intrapersonal): You prefer to work alone and use self-study.

Remember—Providing accessibility does not always mean saving paper—But it does mean providing equity for all!

Logistics for training, meetings and events

- ✔ Have the lights slightly dimmed throughout the training.
- ✔ At the start of the training, meeting or event, go over the agenda, including proposed times for breaks. Avoid deviation as much as possible. When deviation can't be avoided, announce it with as much notice as possible.
- ✔ Announce the location of common needs (accessible restrooms, food, drink, available quiet space) at the beginning of the training, meeting or event. Give permission for participants to step out if needed.
- ✔ Ensure that breaks are long enough for those with disabilities to meet the same needs as the non-disabled. This usually means 10-15 minutes per break, though there should be no verbalized expectation that people are back on time.

- ✔ Reduce use of whiteboard when possible in presentations, as the contrast can make it difficult for those with low vision to follow. Instead, use the drawing or typing function found in Microsoft Office, remembering to choose a color and background with high contrast.
- ✔ Avoid unintentional ableism in activities, even if people appear non-disabled. This includes asking people to stand when speaking, stand up and stretch, or other physical activities; giving people the option to only do these activities if they are able, puts disabled attendees in the position of feeling othered if they do not participate.

Content Delivery

Provide handouts of all presented material for all participants to follow along.

- ✔ Create a few enlarged and colored copies of the materials to hand out to participants who may request them. These will be the identical materials used to present, only enlarged to at least 18 pt. font. Announce as you are providing handouts that you have this format available to anyone who would like one. In this way, accommodation is being provided in an informal way, and you are setting the tone of an equitable space that is designed for everyone's success. For PowerPoint presentation handouts this means having a few copies that are full-page slides.
- ✔ Be intentional in providing auditory and visual cues of presentation material. Describe images, graphs, and tables.

- ✔ Gather emails at entrance so the materials used can be sent to all participants. This will allow those who use screen readers to review the material later.
- ✔ Be aware of those with chemical sensitivities. Do not use strong smelling solvents to clean a space, cleansers to clear a whiteboard, or markers with an overwhelming scents. These can cause allergic or asthmatic reactions and migranes.
- ✔ Ensure that, if a space is bigger than a conference room, a microphone is used even if some do not like it and most parties in the room assure the speaker they can hear.

Step 5

Evaluation

Give an opportunity on evaluation sheets for participants to offer feedback regarding the accessibility of the training. This provides the presenter with essential information to incorporate into later events.

Notes:

Notes:

Notes:

City of Bellevue
Diversity Advantage

mc3299A-12.18.indd